

New PELICAN

Sculpture walk receives first two works; plan in place to make it grow

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Artist Claudia Castillo and Wilton Discount Liquor owner Shekar Reddy in front of the new mural painted on Reddy's storefront. Painted by Castillo and Matthew Dreger, the mural is a project of the board of Art Gallery 21 and one of several new art additions in Wilton Manors.

Wilton Manors – This community may be struggling with the impact of the Coronavirus, but art lovers in Wilton Manors aren't deterred. Resident Mike Sansevero is one step closer to getting a sculpture walk off the ground after two sculptures were donated this month.



The first piece, named Talking Tubes II, was installed at the Zig Zag Building, 2201 Wilton Drive, March 9. The work by Joni Younkings-Herzong is an exact replica of another sculpture she created that is permanently on display at Rzeby Sculpture Park in Pambianice, Poland.

According to Younkings-Herzong, the piece is a metaphor about two separate entities acting together as a single unit. She was inspired by unusual horn instruments, among other things.

A second piece, Slices of Heaven by Key West artist Craig Berube-Gray, is on display at Wilton Executive Suites, 2312 Wilton Drive.

The sculpture is interwoven slices of oranges and, according to Berube-Gray, is symbolic of the connection of people and

community. The oranges can stand alone but, if they look closely, onlookers can see the rising sun and petals of a sunflower.

Each of his pieces is handcrafted and no two pieces are the same.

Sansevero previously approached the city commission about adopting a policy on art in public places and while the notion garnered support from the commissioners, they opted not to draft an ordinance.

Not to be deterred, Sansevero was attending the monthly art walk when he ran into Jeffrey Sterling from the Wilton Manors Entertainment Group [WMEG].

After some discussion, Sterling said he thought WMEG could be a good partner to develop a sculpture walk in the city.

Under the plan, an artist would lend a piece to the group and would be compensated \$1,000.

The piece would be on display for a period of time. At the end of its display time, the piece would be returned to the artist and another would go in its place.



Sansevero said another option is that while the piece is on display, it would be available for purchase. If a sale was made, the sculpture walk group would get a commission which would be reinvested in future projects.

The members of the Island City Art Committee have also been busy with various projects around the city.

Six city utility boxes are getting wraps of various nature related photos; two will be located in the east portion of the city, two in the central area, and two in the west.

The photos that will be used on the boxes are from the 2018 and 2019 art in nature contest sponsored by the Environmental and Sustainability Volunteer Group of Wilton Manors.

An Earth Day event for the contest had been planned but has been postponed. Claudia Castillo and Matthew Dreger, who are a part of the art committee and Art Gallery 21's board, recently painted a mural on the side of Wilton Discount Liquor and Wine.

The mural is painted in the colors of the rainbow with the message "be PROUD." Constance Ruppender, president and co-founder of Art Gallery 21, said having so much public art in the city is important, especially during these trying times. "We have additional public art projects in development, so we're not done yet," she said.

"All I know for sure is when people see these projects in real life, it makes them feel good, and heaven knows we really need to feel those kinds of vibes right now."